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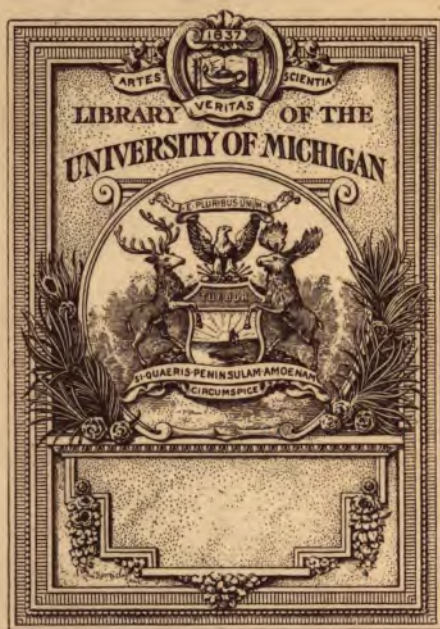
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*AN*  
**OPEN LETTER**  
*TO*  
**GARDINAL GIBBONS**

PAUL SABATIER



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## **AN OPEN LETTER**

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# AN OPEN LETTER

TO HIS EMINENCE

**Cardinal Gibbons**

APROPOS OF  
HIS INTERVIEW ON THE SEPARATION  
OF CHURCH AND STATE  
IN FRANCE

**By Paul Sabatier**

TRANSLATED  
BY JOHN RICHARD SLATTERY



BOSTON  
**Sherman, French & Company**  
1908

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## NOTE

Upon reading the first edition of M. Sabatier's "Open Letter," the translator felt that in an English dress it would impart a fair idea of the status between France and Rome, and with the courteous approval of the author he attempted it. In regard to church properties, the reader should bear in mind that much of the property confiscated at the Revolution was sold to parties whose heirs are to-day staunch Ultramontaines and just as staunch retainers of their inherited estates.

One word more: It appears to the translator that no more importance need be attached to the interviews, statements, addresses of the Catholic hierarchy, at home or abroad, than is given to the platform speeches of politicians. Both the one and the other are inspired from above and have the same aim. *Cicero pro domo sua*.

Lastly, it seems only fair to print the interviews of Cardinal Gibbons, and it is here given as it appeared in the Baltimore "Sun," December 14th, 1906.

The footnotes of the author are put together at the end. They offer very instructive reading, even apart from the text.

J. R. S.



## TO THE READER

About January 7th, 1907, all the political press published long extracts from an interview of His Eminence, Cardinal Gibbons, on French affairs. Thinking that the thoughts of this well-known prelate might have been misunderstood or mistranslated, I wrote him asking for the exact text of his words. In answer he was kind enough to send me the Baltimore "Sun" of Friday, December 14th, 1906.

Upon the receipt of this authentic text, about the middle of February, 1907, the following pages were written. At first they were not intended for the public eye, but as interviews, evidently inspired by the Cardinal's, have since been given throughout America, it seemed useful to print this letter.

Facts—facts indeed easily verifiable—will be found herein. On every side it is evident that those who call upon the French government to stop the religious persecution have read neither the Concordat nor the text of the new law and only from afar followed events in France. But why hesitate, when a Cardinal sketches dramatically the abominable tyranny flourishing among us?

Unhappily, the Archbishop of Baltimore himself seems to have been led rather by impressions than by a calm, serene study of the facts and the documents.

His interview is given on the first page of the newspaper, preceded by long brackets, within



which, after the opening CARDINAL SPEAKS, are arranged in capitals, big and little, the following headlines:

DECLARES FRENCH GOVERNMENT IS ACTUATED BY HATRED OF RELIGION.

---

"CHURCH IS DESPOILED."

---

SEPARATION AS UNDERSTOOD IN THIS COUNTRY NOT THE ISSUE.

---

LOOKS FOR PEOPLE TO RISE.

---

ACCEPTANCE BY THE CHURCH OF THE PRESENT LAW, HE DECLARES, WOULD MEAN THE VERY LIKELY PROSPECT OF GRADUAL EXTINCTION BY DUE PROCESS OF LAW.

---

Then comes a kind of resumé, which is here given in full:

#### SOME OF CARDINAL'S POINTS.

I. "I am weighing my words, and I say with deliberate conviction that the leaders of the present French Government are actuated by nothing less than hatred of religion.

II. "Perhaps the feature of the situation that will surprise us most and call for our just indignation as Americans is the French Government's absolute disregard for the property rights of the church. She has been despoiled of the salaries granted to the ministers of religion as a compensation for the funds which the church relinquished under that express condition.

III. "In addition, the law of separation entirely ignores the constitution and laws of the church, a situation which has no parallel in our American method of keeping Church and State separate.

IV. "Should the church accept the present law she has before her the very likely prospect of gradual extinction by due process of law.

V. "If the separation of Church and State in France meant just what it means in the United States there would have been no such hue and cry raised against it.

VI. "I have too much confidence in the French nation \* \* \* to believe that it will not rise and reject the leaders who are seeking to destroy religion and bringing disgrace upon the name of France."

The paragraphs I number in order to tally therewith my answers in the pages following:

I. To prove hatred of religion, the Cardinal gives not one fact. He merely alleges words of MM. Briand, Jaurès, and Viviani. The echo which the words of M. Viviani, cited by him, brought suffice to show how extraordinary they are.

Those of M. Jaurès in their original form are unattackable orthodoxy and perhaps it would not be impossible to find similar expressions in St. Thomas. Last November (1906) a Roman prelate

read at a social gathering a page of a speech, just delivered by M. Jaurès, and drew tears of religious emotion from many of his hearers.

As to the words which Cardinal Gibbons imputes to M. Briand, they were never uttered.

II. This is a mistake. The ministers of worship drew salaries as State officials. There is not a single word in the Concordat that offers these salaries as a sort of compensation in return for the property confiscated at the Revolution.

III. Another mistake. The Law, being, as it should be, the same for all the denominations, could not enter into the details of any particular organization. But M. Briand declared in the tribune of Parliament that §4 implies, so far as Catholic worship is concerned, canonical communion of the priest with the bishop; of the bishop with the Pope.

IV. How can this be accepted, when it is known that the great majority of the French episcopate petitioned the Pope to give a loyal trial to the new law?

V. Let American Catholics who boast so highly of their separation read simply the Bull *Vehementer*. Therein they will see that separation is absolutely condemned. If then the Holy See supports it in America, it is a toleration entirely forced upon it and merely provisional. Pius X, who after having solemnly consulted the French episcopate, paid no heed to their answers, might also some day, when his thoughts shall wander beyond the



ocean, take it into his head to force the same pure and healthy doctrine in America.

NEW ORLEANS, April 23.—Cardinal Gibbons, replying to a statement by Paul Sabatier, in which M. Sabatier speaks of the Cardinal as being “so proud of the separation between Church and State in America” and recommends him to read the Papal bulletins “which absolutely condemned it,” gave out the following interview to-day:

“In arguing for separation of Church and State, I do not presume to speak for other countries, or for other conditions. I speak only for my own country and its conditions, although I may venture the opinion that, whatever the opinion of the French Episcopate may be with regard to separation of Church and State, it would be better for that country if they could enjoy the real separation of Church and State as it is in this country.

“I am, therefore, unalterably attached to the separation of Church and State in this country, and have always expressed my belief and satisfaction in it. I so expressed myself in its favor thirty years ago, I did so later on in Rome itself, and I have no hesitation in expressing the same solemn belief to-day.

“Indeed, I cannot speak too highly of the present relations between Church and State here, where the Civil Government holds over us the arm of its protection, without interfering with our rights of conscience in proclaiming the truths of the Gospel.”

Cardinal Gibbons is in New Orleans to participate in the bestowing of the pallium upon Archbishop Blenck to-morrow.—*New York Freeman's Journal*, April 27th, 1907.

VI. No, France will not rise against her gov-

ernment for the excellent reason that it is the expression of her own will. If she believes it not perfect, still she judges it is perfectible and in her eyes that is the main point. She did not believe that a coup d'état was in sight because M. Viviani indulged in a little rhetorical blasphemy. And when she witnesses acts of reparation for those blasphemous words, she asks herself why priests, bishops, and cardinals had not similar ceremonies, when a King, Louis XV, the anointed of the Lord, for whom therefore the church stood sponsor, was guilty of singularly more regrettable bad conduct.

No, France will not put aside the ecclesiastical policy of M. Briand, because she is proud of that man, who every time he spoke, threw fresh light on those difficult and delicate questions, and leaving the impression not of a tyrant, who issues a command that no one has the right to discuss or even examine, but rather of a guide, a fellow-worker, opening up to ourselves our nobler part. We are grateful for his independence in the face of Rome and we are the more thankful to him because he flatters no passion, begs no support, and because his politics flow from a plain, clear view of things.

\* \* \* \* \*

It will seem strange, no doubt, for me to speak of Catholics with so much interest that it might be thought I am a member of the Roman Church. Many Protestants and free-thinkers will be scandalized. They will see a contradiction and per-

haps among themselves will call me a traitor. Many Catholics, on the other hand, will answer roughly that I have no right to busy myself with the doings of a church, upon whose registers I am not inscribed.

Nevertheless, I will not hesitate the less in my position, which desires nothing, affects nothing and with, as I hope, an acknowledged disinterestedness. The heart has its own motives for loving that the reason knows not.

I began by loving the church without knowing too well why, perhaps the best way to love. I love her as one loves his mother and country. Were I disposed to seek some of the reasons for this mysterious tie, one of the first would be, without doubt, the longing for the unity of the church. True, it has brought her to commit many blunders and many crimes; but the dream of oneness, of unity, summed up so well in the word *catholic*, does it not form the prophetic program of the society which we wish to develop and towards which, by various ways but with equal devotedness, the working and intellectual classes of the nineteenth century journeyed?

To-day more than ever do I love her, in so much as now she is a prey to a formidable crisis. Here I refer not to external and political storms, like Separation, but of interior and profound troubles. She is almost in the same moral status as was the Synagogue half a century before Christ. She has her sanhedrin, her scribes, her doctors, and her pharisees—a whole mass of officials and clients—



who see only the outside of the structure. They know the letter and hold that what was good enough for so many ages, should still suffice. But, alongside of those elements, at once venerable and out of place, shunning life as a temptation and a snare, weeping over the rags and tatters of a system that cannot be restored, somewhat like those bands of Polish Jews who go to weep beside the ruins of Jerusalem, I behold other ancients who, like Simeon, scan the horizon from the outlooks of the Temple, ready to pick out from the crowd the future Messiah, who comes not to destroy but to fulfil the past and who will see in to-day's religion not an error but a laborious attempt well meant, if unfortunate, towards the Truth.

There are not two Catholic churches; there is but one, the true, which is nothing else than humanity, entering little by little into the consciousness of its mission and longing to establish justice. But there are two kinds of Catholics, the dead, materialistic, clerical Catholics—and the living Catholics.

Why, if distinguishing these two large tendencies, should I not point them out? Why refuse our sympathy, our respect, our admiration for those Catholics of good will, more numerous than is supposed, who thoroughly anxious to remain loyal children of the church, forget not that above the Pope stands the Credo; above the Credo, the Gospels and above the Gospels the Individual Conscience; that man is not made for the church, but the church for man; that her mission is not to fill

him with sighs and make his days upon earth a sort of exile, but rather to fit him for duties, forever new, and burdens ever more glorious? Such suffer a severe trial, but as one of them has well said: "The tempest scatters more seed throughout the world than it uproots trees."

But what must be thought of their opponents, those Catholics who cry out for liberty with so much violence at the very moment when, in order to down their brethren, they have recourse only to intimidations and pressure.

Ideas are not killed with the blows of a stick. The day, too, is gone when history can be made out of falsehoods. Let the splendid unity of views on the part of the French episcopate be held up before us as much as any one pleases, it will deceive neither Pius X, who had all the documents under his eyes, nor the bishops, who will scarcely forget the painful discussions brought on by the clash of two opposing views, nor the public above all, which smiles quietly and asks itself why so much mystery if there is nothing to hide.

The French crisis is much more imposing and tragic than is gathered from reading the burning words of Cardinal Gibbons or the Encyclicals of Pius X. These leaders see only the shell, political and ecclesiastical. They seem not to grasp its huge religious import. Is it this ye are gazing at? might Jesus repeat.

It is not the process of the French government, which unveils itself before our eyes; rather do we witness the manifestation of a certain idea of re-



ligious authority. Ecclesiastical authority, should it or could it refrain from entering into all the magnificent palaces which come across its path, where men, well meaning now and then but with little sense and more often interested, beg it to take up its abode?

To all those parties who ask of it a political dogma, a social dogma and even perhaps a literary or artistic dogma; to all such faithful as demand miracles, should it not answer by exhorting to unceasing labor. "Seek and ye shall find."

Is not Pius X in danger of forgetting that Jesus Himself was tempted, and that his real enemies are not they who persecute but those who come to him with marks of respect and reverence. "If thou art the Vicar of God, show thy power. Is it not written that the gates of Hell shall not prevail against thee?"

Behold the real crisis.

Assisi, Holy Thursday, 1907.

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

Hardly had the first edition of this work been out, than the base as well as the details of my argument were found confirmed to the letter by the publication of the Montaguine papers.

Whoever has studied these documents has seen that the great majority of the French Episcopate favored a loyal trial of the law of separation and they labored strongly but uselessly to restrain the Holy See to a *Tolerari posse*.

It is evident that at the very moment the Holy See condemned the law under the pretext that it would give to the laity a high hand over the church, its own stand was inspired by laymen like MM. Piou, Grosseau, Costa and others known only to France by their hatred for democratic ideas.

Up to the present, His Eminence, Cardinal Gibbons, has not answered me. But others have spoken, while the *Osservatore Romano*, *la Civiltà Cattolica*, *la Riscossa de Breganza*, to mention only official or quasi-official journals, took me in hand. I received sympathetic messages from priests, whom I knew not even by sight perhaps, but in whose hearts it is an infinite honor for me to find no matter how small a corner. I shall add nothing on so many pages, burning, sad and soul-stirring, which I have read and re-read with heartfelt emotion.

Let all those unknown friends accept the expression of my thanks. Why should I not send it? It goes forth with special sympathy and admiration for the isolated ones of the Abruzzi, of the Basilicata, of Provence and Du Berry.\*

"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Ps. 126. If it suits the Ecclesiastical authority to ignore the crises through which Italian and French Catholicism in particular is passing and to persuade itself that peace reigns in the church and in consciences, it is not we who can lead it to a change of views.

The main point is that no heart bows to its troubles and despair takes hold of no soul. If for many months, every day brought a fresh stroke of authority, every day also heard the echo of a new voice calling out with unconquerable firmness a religious truth, which would prove a spiritual food easy to take in a vatican, as it were, for our generation.

Following hard after the priests, whose mouths were to be closed, rise up the laity, whose pen cannot be broken. The methods taken to stop the *Rinnovamento* of Milan, and the sober answer of its young editors to H. E., the Cardinal, Archbishop of Milan, mark a red-letter day in the history of the Church.

Assisi, May 30th, 1907.

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\* Ancient Provence comprised the present departments of Bouches-du-Rhône, Var, Vancluse. Du Berry, whose capital was Bourges, is now the department of Char.

# **INTERVIEW OF CARDINAL GIBBONS**

**AS PRINTED IN THE "BALTIMORE SUN"  
OF DECEMBER 14, 1906**





## CARDINAL SPEAKS

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DECLARES FRENCH GOVERNMENT IS ACTUATED BY HATRED OF RELIGION.

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"CHURCH IS DESPOILED."

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SEPARATION AS UNDERSTOOD IN THIS COUNTRY NOT THE ISSUE.

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LOOKS FOR PEOPLE TO RISE.

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### SOME OF CARDINAL'S POINTS.

"I am weighing my words and I say with deliberate conviction that the leaders of the present French Government are actuated by nothing less than hatred of religion.

"Perhaps the feature of the situation that will surprise us most and call for our just indignation as Americans is the French Government's absolute

disregard for the property rights of the church. She has been despoiled of the salaries granted to the ministers of religion as a compensation for the funds which the church relinquished under that express condition.

"In addition, the law of separation entirely ignores the constitution and laws of the church—a situation which has no parallel in our American method of keeping church and state separate.

"Should the church accept the present law she has before her the very likely prospect of gradual extinction by due process of law.

"If the separation of church and state in France meant just what it means in the United States there would have been no such hue and cry raised against it.

"I have too much confidence in the French nation \* \* \* to believe that it will not rise and reject the leaders who are seeking to destroy religion and bringing disgrace upon the name of France."

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"The American public does not understand the present crisis in France," said Cardinal Gibbons when asked last evening for his opinion on the French situation.

"I am getting to be an old man now and I think I know my countrymen. They love fair play; they love liberty; they love to see humane dealings of man with man. And the late years have shown how cordially they hate injustice, tyranny and inhumanity.

"And yet France has treated her noblest citizens with injustice and inhumanity, and America, which has sympathy for the oppressed of all nations, has raised no protest nor uttered a word of sympathy.

"If I believed that my countrymen would knowingly see a great and beneficent organization un-

justly deprived of its property and the means of continued usefulness; would knowingly see tens of thousands of honest men and noble women robbed of their just income and means of support; would knowingly see hundreds of thousands and even several millions of people brutally wounded in what they hold dearest and most sacred; would knowingly see a majority in the chambers utterly disregard and trample upon the rights of the minority and the rights of millions of their countrymen—in the name of liberty; would knowingly see tens of thousands of men and women—who happen to be priests and nuns—turned out of their homes for no crime but that of loving God and serving their neighbor—I say if my countrymen can see and recognize all this injustice and tyranny and cruelty and refuse genuine sympathy to those who suffer by them because of their religious belief, then I will leave life without that faith in American love of justice and liberty and humanity which has been my comfort and support and hope during a long career.

#### HATRED OF RELIGION.

“But the American people have not had these things put fairly before them. Our own press has been to a considerable extent the reflex of the Parisian anti-clerical press. Most people over here have little conception of the French anti-clericals. They look on the leaders of this party as enlightened statesmen seeking to preserve the republic from the attacks of an aggressive clergy.

“There have been honest and sincere lovers of republican government among anti-clericals I admit, but the majority of them have far less love of the republic than they have hatred of religion.

“I am weighing my words, and I say with deliberate conviction that the leaders of the present



French Government are actuated by nothing less than hatred of religion.

"We have no spirit akin to theirs in this country. We have here much indifference to religion, but we have no body of men, no great party that makes it a chief aim to weaken the power of religion and if possible utterly to destroy it out of the land.

#### JACOBIN PARTY STILL LIVES.

"But in France the Jacobin party is not dead. Their spirit is as living to-day as it was in the last decade of the eighteenth century; they hate God, they hate Christ, they hate His religion as much as ever their fathers hated them.

"But they have learned a more prudent and measured method of attack. They are almost scientific in the means they take to suppress Christianity. And yet the utterances of such men are received as unsuspectingly by many Americans as would be a discourse by Mr. Cleveland or Mr. Roosevelt or Mr. Taft—men who recognize the powerful influence that religion has in promoting the welfare of society.

"It is easy to show that I am not misrepresenting the spirit of anti-clericals. They make no secret of their hatred of Christianity. They avow it in the press and in the chambers.

"Let me give you a few examples of the language of these men and you can judge if the American people have ever heard anything similar from their own leaders, or if any American statesmen would dare to utter such statements.

#### QUOTES SOCIALIST LEADERS.

"In the course of a long speech in the Chamber of Deputies the well-known Socialist leader, Jaurès, said:

"If God himself appeared before the multitudes

in palpable form, the first duty of man would be to refuse Him obedience and to consider Him not as a master to whom men should submit, but as an equal with whom men may argue.' /

"M. Viviani, the new Minister of Labor, speaking also in the Chamber of Deputies, gave utterance to these sentiments:

"'All of us together, first by our forefathers, then by our fathers, now by ourselves, have been attached to the work of anti-clericalism and irreligion. We have snatched the human conscience from belief in a future life. \* \* \* Do you think that the work is at an end? No, it is but beginning.'

"The Chamber decreed that the discourse from which this extract is taken should be placarded in every town and village of France.

"In the same strain the present Minister of Public Worship and the most strenuous advocate of the law of separation, M. Briand, said in an address to school teachers:

"'The time has come to root up from the minds of French children the ancient faith which has served its purpose and replace it with the light of free thought; it is time to get rid of the Christian idea. We have hunted Jesus Christ out of the army, the navy, the schools, the hospitals, insane and orphan asylums and law courts, and now we must hunt him out of the State altogether.'

"What would we Americans say if a Cabinet officer were to propose this as the great aim of his administration?

#### SWEET WORDS; BLOODY DEEDS.

"For some reason the sentiments of the anti-clericals are not reproduced by our papers. But let a French statesman utter counsels of moderation and sentiments of liberty, when he wishes to check his followers and prevent them from foiling

his plans by too great haste and zeal, then his fair words are spread before the eyes of our people. They are taken as the expression of wisdom and fair play.

"For a spinner of beautiful discourses, breathing humanity and justice, the French demigod cannot be surpassed.

"It is a common observation of historians that in the most bloody seasons of the French Revolution the air was full of sweet words about fraternity and liberty, coming from the very men who made the streets run with blood. These men and those who inherit their spirit can talk more divinely and act more diabolically than any other on earth. They do not, of course, want bloodshed now, but the spirit of hatred exists in them just as strongly.

#### CONFISCATION AT REVOLUTION.

"In order to understand the present situation it must be borne in mind that before the French Revolution all churches, all ecclesiastical lands and properties belonged to the church by as just a title as property is owned in our own country by the Catholic, Methodist or any other religious denomination.

"At the Revolution all buildings, landed properties, funds, etc., were confiscated by the revolutionists. But the injustice of this was soon recognized, and the Constituent Assembly publicly and solemnly pledged itself to render some sort of justice to the church by giving for the support of the clergy and the maintenance of worship an annual budget. This amounted to a little more than 1 per cent. on the values appropriated by the State.

"Let it be remembered, too, that this act of quasi-justice took place 12 years before the Concordat between the Holy See and Napoleon I.



The payment, therefore, of the clerical stipends was not dependent simply upon a Concordat, but was a recognition of a just debt owed by the State to the church for appropriating funds which had been producing a revenue for the support of the clergy and the maintenance of worship.

#### BACK TO 1880.

"The present conflict dates back to the year 1880, when a large number of religious houses were closed by order of the Government and their occupants dispersed and forced to seek religious liberty in the land of the stranger.

"From that time scarcely a year has passed without some annoyance to the church—a series of petty acts of discrimination that were bound in the long run to call for a protest. The protest came in the form of a personal letter from Pope Leo XIII to President Grevy, in May, 1883, which was answered courteously enough indeed, but the answer was a mere waste of time and paper so far as results were concerned.

"In spite of the Pontiff's reasonable objections the injurious laws were passed. As far as possible God and religion were banished from the schools and hospitals, the oath deprived of its religious character and clerics impressed into the military service.

#### LAW OF ASSOCIATIONS.

"Next, in 1901, the law of associations was passed—a law which, as interpreted and executed by Combes, caused untold misery to thousands.

"By it the schools in charge of religious associations were forced out of existence. The members of the different religious congregations, not only male, but female as well, were sent forth, cast out upon the world and obliged either to eke out an existence as best they could in their own native

France or to go into exile. Many of these were old men or old women who had spent a lifetime within the convent walls, and were now driven out, no longer able to begin a new career and with no means of support.

CONCORDAT DISSOLVED.

"Finally, in December, 1905, the Concordat was dissolved and separation of Church and State proclaimed.

"It is essential to bear in mind that the Concordat was a genuine contract, and that this contract was annulled by one of the parties, the French Government, with no regard to the wishes of the other party. The Sovereign Pontiff was in no wise consulted, and utterly ignored in every stage of the proceedings.

"THE CHURCH DESPOILED."

"Perhaps the feature of the situation that will surprise us most and call for our just indignation as Americans is the French Government's absolute disregard for the property rights of the church.—She has been despoiled of the salaries granted to the ministers of religion as a compensation for the funds which the church relinquished under that express condition.

"We say it not in the heat of passion, not as partisans, but simply as lovers of justice.

"What should we think if our own Government had seized on the friars' lands in the Philippines without giving any compensation, or after having pledged solemnly a compensation should afterward refuse to keep its part of the contract?

"Furthermore, suppose the American Government had left to the Filipinos merely the use, and not the ownership, of their churches, and only under conditions laid down by itself, and even that their very use was liable to be revoked at any time.

## "WITHOUT PARALLEL."

"In addition, the provisions of the new law (law of separation) entirely ignore the constitution and laws of the church—a situation that has no parallel in our American method of keeping Church and State separate. Here there is due recognition of the laws governing every lawful society, while under the recent French law provisions are made for organizing Catholic worship without any proper reference to the duly authorized officers of the church—the bishops and priests.

## PROSPECT OF EXTINCTION.

"This is the point to which the Holy Father has objected most strenuously. The provision for associations of worship (*associations cultuelles*) opens the way for schismatical organizations, which have, in fact, in a few cases, been already attempted. It places the church at the mercy of the judgment of the Council of State, whose decision in these matters is final.

"Should the church accept the present law, she has before her the very likely prospect of gradual extinction by due process of law. She has learned by long and sad experience to place no trust in the promises of the French Government. She knows the spirit that animates it.

"She remembers that M. Waldeck-Rousseau was ready enough to interpret liberally the law of associations; but his successor, M. Combes, showed himself by no means willing to follow in his footsteps. The law of separation, if accepted, will inevitably lead to the destruction of religious liberty, just as the law of associations led to the destruction of religious congregations.

## SITUATION IS DIFFERENT.

"If the separation of Church and State in France meant just what it means in the United States,



there would have been no such hue and cry raised against it. Very likely to many it would have been by no means undesirable.

"But the situations are not at all analogous. In proof of this we have only to point to the fact that on several occasions some of the leading French Catholic Deputies bluntly put the question: 'Why do you not give us separation of Church and State such as exists in America?'

#### AS PRIEST SEES IT.

"The real nature of the separation has been well expressed in these words of a French priest:

"The Concordat might be compared to a conjugal union in which the state represented the husband, the church the wife. To-day they are separated, but the separation has simply consisted in the husband banishing the wife from her home, keeping all the fortune for himself and preventing her from acquiring any other by managing himself the little income which he allows her to gain, and likewise in exercising a jealous watch over all her words and actions.'

#### GUISE OF TYRANNY.

"It is not separation alone, therefore, that the Holy Father is repudiating, but tyranny in the guise of separation. Hence it was imperative upon him to resist.

"For the last 20 years and more the policy of the Holy See and the French hierarchy has been one of patience and conciliation. It was with the deepest regret, only after all his conciliatory measures had failed, that the Pontiff at length found himself driven to a course of passive resistance.

"In choosing this course the Holy Father did not run counter to the opinion and wishes of the French Episcopate. A canvass of the situation

has shown that the vast majority of the bishops were with him, and all, without a single exception, have accepted and obeyed his decisions.

"Nor were the French clergy at all behind their leaders in manifesting their loyalty. Last summer at the gatherings of the clergy in almost every diocese resolutions were taken to be forwarded to the Sovereign Pontiff expressive of their gratitude and loyalty.

#### SYMPATHY OUTSIDE FRANCE.

"This feeling has not been by any means confined to France. The bishops of England, Canada, Italy and other countries are in full sympathy with their brethren in France and have not hesitated to give strong expression to their disapproval of the unjust law.

"In our own country on the occasion of the centenary of the Baltimore Cathedral a message of encouragement and sympathy was forwarded to the French hierarchy in the name of the bishops of the United States. In this we expressed the hope that the Catholics of France might soon enjoy the religious freedom accorded their brethren on this side of the ocean.

#### EXPECTS RENEWAL OF FAITH.

"For myself I have too much confidence in the good of the French clergy, in their high-mindedness, their zeal, their courage, their readiness to suffer and to sacrifice themselves, to believe that they will tamely allow religion to be strangled in France, and I have too much confidence in the French nation to believe, now that they can see and realize the meaning of the measures taken and the animus of those behind them, that the natural feelings of justice and humanity and the love of liberty will not arise in their hearts and lead them to reject the leaders, who, in seeking to destroy



religion, are bringing disgrace upon the name of France. And I have too much confidence in God and his protection of the church not to feel encouraged to look for a renewal of faith and religion in France.

“The view of the case as I have given it is based on the facts and the documents; we need only leave it to an impartial and liberty-loving people to decide which party is responsible for the present miserable conflict.”

**AN OPEN LETTER TO HIS EMI-  
NENCE, CARDINAL GIBBONS,  
ARCHBISHOP OF BALTIMORE**



AN OPEN LETTER TO HIS EMINENCE,  
CARDINAL GIBBONS, ARCHBISHOP  
OF BALTIMORE.

*Your Eminence:*

Kindly allow me to express to you with respectful simplemindedness all the sorrow I felt upon reading your appeal to American public opinion apropos of the separation of Church and State in France.

Of course, it appears not out of place to see the Catholics of the entire world taken up with our country and following very anxiously the steps in a crisis, which every day seems more novel and serious. Hence, when, on May 1st, 1906, Your Eminence, in the name of the American Episcopate, wrote to Cardinal Richard, expressing sympathy, esteem and best wishes, no one among us, as far as I know, raised his voice to criticise that mark of affection. And yet, your letter was not only severe upon our Government, but it showed that its author—in speaking of official Atheism—was greatly deceived, as much in regard to the spirit and letter of the new law as also in regard to the mind of our parliamentary majority. ✍

Now, in your latest ringing interview, you no longer seem to body forth your sympathy with the church of France, but rather to stir up against French Government and Parliament opinion in the United States. Now this is a serious fault on

the part of a man filling so elevated a station and who adds to his declaration all the emphasis possible in saying: "I weigh my words." If the state of affairs in France is so harmful to Catholicism, is it not strange that you waited longer than a year before making this indignant protest? That you allowed so long a time to go by would be understood, if the law once at work had proven filled with pitfalls or had been carried out in a hateful, tyrannical spirit. Now, just the opposite is the case, and our Government has not ceased from interpreting it in a straightforward, liberal way.

Since your latest interview is not the outcome of a more patient study of documents and facts, it becomes needful to seek its cause elsewhere and to feel that the Archbishop of Baltimore allows himself to be drawn by a rush of international protests, too harmonious in time and text, not to appear somewhat artificial and inspired. The law has not changed since the day when a gentleman, whose high authority, I trust, you recognize, Count d'Haussonville, said of it:

"After all, it is liberty, for hereafter Catholics, as such, can unite and own, that is, can rejoice in two essential rights. \* \* \* Why, then, go on repeating that the Faith will meet with great dangers in France from the day the clergy cease to be paid by the government and the bishops to be nominated by the Minister of Worship? Such talk astonishes me, for it shows little confidence in the Church's vitality."

I take the liberty to recommend these words

of that illustrious Catholic writer to your consideration, as also the pamphlet from which they are quoted (1).\*

A plain Frenchman, who loves his small country, France, and our large country, the Church, I feel myself forced to tell you how deplorable are your grave and solemn words, since they are calculated to create in those who depend solely upon them entirely wrong ideas about that which goes on among us at this moment.

\* \* \* \* \*

Somewhat like those Spanish paintings, all light on one side and all darkness on the other, the picture you draw for us wins the eye and gains notice. For you the light is America, where the Church has nothing to desire. France is the obverse darkness, where perverse and diabolic minds are sovereign masters, poisoning the air and lording it over the elect, whom they hold captive.

There is no harm in the United States of America appearing to you as an earthly paradise, and hence I am happy for your country, towards which as to a great sister, beloved and admired, turns the whole of France, except a clerical minority, as noisy as they are few (2).

The more, however, this opposition of light and darkness is insisted upon, the more interesting it becomes; so much the more sober and judicious minds regard it as necessary not to accept it, as the true picture of the real, without careful proof.

Behind every one of your statements is hidden

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\* For all notes, see Appendix.



a kind of plea to those who govern France, to grant to the Roman Church the liberties it enjoys in America. Very handsome and very easy, to be sure. Too much so, in fact, for therein, permit me to tell you, lies the great blunder, which spoils all your exposé: You forgot to tell your readers how the Catholicism of the New World differs from that of the Old.

You speak of the Catholics of France as though by good luck they were the great majority. Neither you nor myself, Monseigneur, can know the relative number of the faithful, to whom Catholicism is a religious life and only such. But what you should know as well as myself—and I regret it as much as you—is that for a long time the enormous majority of those who in France have spoken in the name of Catholicism have been clericals. If you wish to be fair to our legislators and our Government, it would be well, when addressing your fellow citizens, to begin by sketching with quick and happy pen the portrait of that strange sect, more political than religious, which in Latin countries attempt, too often successfully, to constitute Catholicism.

You are aware that in France these temple traffickers have almost everywhere invaded the sanctuary and terrorized the clergy (3).

Why will you not address them? Why not denounce them as the shame and open sore of the Church? The day when France will find herself the presence of a Catholicism emancipated from sm, be sure that no effort will be needed to

give it liberty, and far from combatting it France will welcome it into a universal society filled only with religious aspirations as the incarnation of her dreams and her genius.

Is it not unfortunate that after having said that *separation* in America means *liberty*, while in France it spells *tyranny*, you did not regard it as a duty to strengthen this statement by examples and proofs?

My perfect ignorance of American legislation permits me not to give a correct statement of the immense superiority it offers in this matter. I believe I may, without impertinence, ask if your indignation, added to that of so many bishops of Canada, South America and Spain, led you not to condemn in France the very thing which seems to you natural and even glorious in America.

The point upon which you insist most vehemently is that disputes which might arise in the Worship Associations would be settled by the Council of State. This is true. Would it be so frightful? I wish to think not; for, in fact, yourself, Monseigneur, in your letter of May 1st, 1906,\* say that in the United States such disputes are settled by the civil tribunals. In laying them before the Council of State, our law puts them before the highest tribunal of our land. How could this be bettered? Would you wish us to carry them to Rome? If such is your thought, I trust you will explain it to us and

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\* Letter to Cardinal Richard.—Translator.



show how in this point—so important—the French law differs from your own.

\* \* \* \* \*

Another note of this *leit motiv* running from one end to the other of your views, and by its simplicity and unity at once its beauty and its danger, is the notion that France might now be the victim of God's enemies. It is not, however, easy to understand how atheists—that is, people who admit not the existence of God—can hate a God who in their eyes exists not.

True, in speaking of Jacobins and of the hatred of religion, you follow only the forms of language in use among most Catholic organs on this side of the ocean. These think it well to keep up the ways of training of those mothers who, in order to keep their children from wandering away into the depths of the garden, tell them: the devil is hidden behind those trees. Soon the day dawns—sooner than is believed—when the child knows that there is nothing behind the trees and loses all trust in his mother's word. If, on the contrary, he still believes her, the outcome will be no happier, for when grown up he will not cease to fear men and nature and look around for snares and demons.

Is it unfair to suppose that if Latin Europe has so many sceptics, so many helpless, so many lax; if it is inferior to the New World, this is due in part at least to such deplorable upbringing?

France may have atheists, but they have not dreamed of elevating their opinions into official doctrine. To grant them such aspirations, we must

believe that they carry "Arrière-pensées" and are liars and hypocrites. By what right do we think so? Better inspired, indeed, was that humble, brave priest (the Abbé Lemire, member of Parliament), who had the courage to declare from the tribune of the Chamber of Deputies that he believed in the sincerity of those who declare that they wish to make the law of separation a law of liberty and deliverance as well for the Church as for the State.

The clericals have been silent on this memorable speech of the Abbé Lemire (4). That a priest could be cheered by the French Parliament and even from the benches of the deputies who call themselves Catholics, is a fact fatal to that picture of our national congress which is at times spread abroad. Silence followed that speech and at times I would love to believe that it was not a studied silence. But journals, anxious to win respect and consideration, should not too often relapse into such sort of forgetfulness.

With what a wealth of telegrams has not the scattering of the seminaries been told! Now in omitting to add that it was simply a question of the State taking over properties belonging to it, upon the public was impressed the conviction that religious education was at stake and the formation of the clergy hindered. How forgetful not to add that to-day throughout France the seminaries are freely reopened in new houses. So well was it done that strangers coming among us are astonished to see nuns, priests, monks going about

peacefully and the religious services kept up as in the past.

I hold no brief for France, but I feel assured that if you cared to raise the issue, you would find it difficult, with the exception or some unworthy priests or some apostates driven by a mystic fury against their past, to discover among laymen any of whom you might say that they are led on by hatred of God.

"The violent sectaries who long for the destruction of the Church and of all religion are in France but a very small minority."

Permit me to apply this opinion to your statements, Your Eminence. It comes from no friend of mine; it is that of Father Abt, S. J. (5).

In asking you to judge the present crisis more fairly and calmly, a task is proffered not beyond the powers of a prince of the Church. A priest, whose character is as well appreciated by you, I trust, as at home, the Abbé Félix Klein, published some months ago a work in which he knew how to point out with much tact the state of mind at present in France. This well-known professor at the Catholic Institute of Paris thought not that his love for the church made it a duty upon him to ignore or despise all that lives or seems to live outside of her (6).

That Holy Mother teaches that in the next world there will be heaven, hell and purgatory. I take it that she impresses upon her children like views of this world; that she teaches them that most men, Frenchmen even, are neither saints nor



devils, that they are children of humanity, and if to attain its heights depends upon their own efforts, this victory also has need of the prayer, love and help of the Just.

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It must be granted, Your Eminence, that the stand you believed it a duty to assume in the present events has pained your friends in France, so much the more as they had counted upon the disinterested help of the American Episcopate as leading to peace.

We fancied the distance that you are from Rome and from Paris would enable you to follow the affair with an impartiality not to be expected of those in the thick of the fight. We were hoping that standing above the daily fracas, the petty skirmishes and combats, you would grasp the main lines of the controversy and instead of seeing in it a disaster and an anguish, you would turn your eyes and ours also to the future with its glorious vista of duties and cares. The term *separation of the Churches and the State* is wholly negative and taken alone would give a false idea of the crisis. From the standpoint of the Government, the expression holds, for it states, indeed, the mark which the greatest fact in modern Christian evolution will leave upon the State registers. Let not then the official language mislead us. A birth is also a separation. Now it is a birth that we witness; the bringing forth of a new civilization.

Those who attack the new law with the cry of Liberty! Liberty! seem, indeed, not to understand

that our fathers, in proclaiming freedom of conscience, laid down a principle whence, in a future more or less distant, would surely issue the separation of the Churches and the State. For, from the moment that the State protects one or more churches, the liberty it leaves to the rest is not true liberty. It is only toleration.

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The question of church property fills a great deal of your interview. Have you, perhaps, too hastily likened the ownership of churches in America to that in European countries?

Our clergy protested loudly against returning its property to the State—a return they might have hindered and a great majority of the Episcopate wished to prevent by accepting the law, as we shall see further on. And yet they seemed less anxious than you, Monseigneur. This relative moderation arises from the fact that they know perfectly well that church properties belong to the clergy in pretty much the same way as the prefectures belong to the prefects or the Louvre Museum to its Board of Administrators.

As long as the church was part of the public service, it should enjoy the same privileges as the rest of State officialdom. But if, as authorities on the subject assure us, the number of French Catholics are not more than three or four millions, it is perfectly proper that the places, given them when ten times the present number, should relapse to the State.

It is right also to reply that a large part of

Ecclesiastical properties come from gifts and legacies, made by persons who wish explicitly to maintain Roman Catholic worship. Now, just as the purchasers of a cemetery lot in perpetuity know very well that it is not absolute, so the dying, who leave donations to certain works, should realize that after a period long or short, their wishes would be forgotten. The day the Church gained the victory over Rome, she made no scruple in taking over the Pagan temples, which surely were not built to foster the worship of the Galilean. These latter days, our land is filled with preachers, very eloquent, indeed, who love to expatiate upon the words "The stones will cry out." Winding up, they point to the stones of the church of the National Vow, Montmartre, covered with initials and inscriptions, and protest indignantly against the profane intruders. It was a grand stroke, yet in spite of the preacher's evident emotion, the audience listened calmly. Perhaps they fancied that the cry of the stones is a plight of the soul and that at Rome the plaint of the Pagan inscriptions, far from troubling the worship of the Christian intruders with the nasty cries: "Away with the robber," mingled itself discreetly with the liturgy in order to chant: *Christus vincit, Christus regnat, Christus imperat.*

Behold doubtless why, when the journals, the self-styled pious, published the most wicked insinuations against the Government or the Parliament, public opinion was in no wise affected. For well it knew, even in the smallest hamlets, that of rob-



bery there could be no question, when properties, belonging to no particular person, were set aside for the benefit of the poor or for works of public usefulness.

—Is it not strange, furthermore, that the Church holds a perfectly Pagan notion of property, and as firmly as though it were a principle which needed only to be laid down? Would it not be better if she sought her practical teachings among the examples left her by so many saintly souls, of whom she is rightly proud?

St. Francis of Assisi declared that it was not right to sing of worthy knights when the heart was lax. Would he not be shocked to hear his own praises chanted by men who would let loose civil war in France in order not to lose properties which they earned not by the sweat of their brows?

"It is not every day that there is offered to Catholics," wrote M. Pierre Jay, "the sublime chance of presenting the other cheek. Behold it now offered after a century of quiet. Will they know how to profit by this favor in order to reconquer the world in renouncing it?" (7.)

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Is it claimed that the new legislation is perfect? Not a single politician can be found who thinks so, and fortunately our legislators make no pretence to infallibility. Perhaps their work would have left less to be desired if the most interested parties, viz., the clergy, had shared in its preparation. Unluckily, they allowed themselves to be carried away into a policy of obstruction. They were ignorant of the law. They listened neither to the

advice of prudent men who pleaded for a settlement, nor the voice of the saints who preached the forgiveness of offences and the love of enemies.

The clergy stood apart and thus acted exactly opposite to what the American clergy would do. Once more this shows you how unjust it would be to compare the attitude of our respective governments without first stating the contrasts in the conduct of the clergy of both lands.

Of course, the law is not perfect, but its base will remain, for it responds to a profound change in the trend of public opinion in our country. A political defeat might lead to a temporary halt, perhaps even to a reaction. But such a result would have that indefinable superficialness and vagueness, shown by every régime which had hoped to uproot in France the principles of the Revolution.

Generations follow one another and are not alike. The hot-headed *religieuse* who call upon the church authorities to resist obstinately the French, reminding them that after 1793 came 1802, seem to forget that if the Concordat made peace between the Church and the State, far from being a victory for the church, that treaty was in reality the acceptance by the Papacy of a whole part in the conquest of the Revolution. Thus far, no results have followed from the tactics of the clericals, who have not stopped from making every effort to lead the Government into the same pitfalls as in 1793. If, as far as the Government is concerned, they are stranded, they have been more successful

among Catholics. They have brought it about that many minds are beset with violently bloody figments together with a chronic state of nightmare.

Perhaps it would have been better for the glory of the Carmelites of Compiègne, if their beatification had not seemed a by-play in these childish schemes.\*

You assure us, Monseigneur, that the Jacobins are not yet wiped out. The opposite would be wonderful; permit me, however, to tell you that between those of our day and their forerunners lies a great difference. The latter, born under Louis XV, were brought up almost to a man upon the church's knee by the Jesuits as tutors.† Those of our day have been reared upon the knee of France, and excepting enough to prove the rule they have no taste for persecution. Neither for them nor for France do I regret this, but I feel very sincerely for a host of flaming prophets, all of whose predictions and calculation it serves to upset.

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\* The Carmelites of Compiègne were put under the guillotine in 1794. Pius X beatified them, May 27th, 1906. At present the cause of the bishops and priests massacred in September, 1792, is before Rome and their beatification will no doubt follow. It seems as if the purpose of these ceremonies, apparently for religious motives, is really in the main political.—Translator.

† The Jesuits were the great official instructors of France for the first half of the eighteenth century. In 1764, the order was thrust forth from the country and they left behind them an army of the bitterest enemies that Christianity has ever had. To do them justice, they were destroyed by weapons which they had themselves supplied. The intelligence which they had developed and sharpened turned inevitably against the incurable faults in their own system. (Critical Miscellanies by John Morley, "Condorcet." Vol. II, p. 187.)—Translator.



If for many months, the words, in large capitals: RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN FRANCE have been used as headlines in religious journals, not a single fact has happened to justify the charge of religious persecution. Have the majority in power at any time decreed dogmas to which the minority had to submit? Have they condemned and forbade to their fellow citizens certain beliefs? Such a spectacle would not be new in France, but when we have referred to it, you know as well as I who were then in power.\* Men not yet fifty years old can recall the day when Protestant soldiers had to genuflect when the Blessed Sacrament was passing. Is there anything similar in the new law or even in the conduct of Parliament? (8)

True, the reproach is brought against the law of separation, and it is one of your chief sorrows, that the Roman Catholic hierarchy is ignored. It is creditable, however, that if you had read in their fulness our parliamentary debates and not biased resumé's of them, you could not have made such a charge.

In fact, in §4, it is enacted that the new worship associations shall be created:

"In conformity to the rules of general ordinance of the worship whose exercise they propose to carry on."

It is no secret that the general ordinance of Roman Catholic worship includes the hierarchy and it was furthermore announced that the authority of the hierarchy was recognized in that text. (9)

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\* Reference, doubtless, to the massacre of St. Bartholomew and the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.—Translator.

And yet this prevented not Pius X from declaring that the law ignored the hierarchy. Absorbed by the notion he has framed to himself of the men in power in France, he has turned a deaf ear to every voice raised to warn him of his error.

A number of Catholics, aroused at the prospect of the huge misunderstanding which was growing between France and Rome, addressed to him a bold appeal. They found themselves the butt of the vilest insinuations of the clerical press, because they had written anonymously. And this they did in order to leave their ideas work of their own strength without any fear that their origin might add to or detract from their weight. (10)

What, however, at Rome count the most venerable and weighty names? Evident it became when, December 7th, 1906, Cardinal Lecot, Archbishop of Bordeaux, and Mgr. Germain, Archbishop of Toulouse, took the steps needed in order that their curés should make the annual declaration for the maintenance of worship. (11)

The next day, December 8th, Rome obliged them, under threat of being treated as schismatics, to forbid their curés the very counsels they gave them the day before. (12)

Whoever will study these facts would doubtless find it hard to say that the condemnations issuing from Rome repeat only the unanimous wish of the clergy of France and that the annual declaration implies a submission forbidden by conscience.

Here, as throughout the whole crisis, Rome seems to have in view above all else not to impart



light, but to have its own way and to shut out every individual initiative. It is not a strife fruitful of ideas to which we are invited; the chief thought seems to be that it is question of a war only to end in wiping out the enemy.

But, permit me to add, Monseigneur, there is a danger threatening the Church worse than separation, worse than all possible persecutions. It is, if in spite of the publicity of our parliamentary debates, priests, bishops and pope, turning their eyes from the reality, would judge the deeds, words, and the men from the pictures drawn day by day, in a hateful press, which seems to have undertaken the task of misleading the views of Catholics in order to provoke them. (13)

In the long run, nothing can withstand facts. The church is rather easily pardoned for having created legends, not always disinterested, in order to nourish the childhood of our civilization. She is forgiven for having so well unlearned some things, which to-day could not be called by their right names.

The best means by which Rome may recommend to us her metaphysics and her dogma would be, doubtless, to maintain an implacable severity towards herself in whatever regards the modest statement of facts and the perfect correctness of language.

For a long while nothing could be more just and more straight than the attitude of the French Government. When its language has been wrongly

explained, this has been done only by enemies. Can as much be said of the Holy See?

That august authority speaks only when it wishes, and looks not upon it as a fault to take its time before proclaiming its decisions. And yet when these decisions are known, everybody, friend or enemy, is at sixes and sevens as to their meaning and bearing.

If only the impious and infidels had misunderstood the orders of Pius X in the Bull *Gravissimo*, it might be alleged that their malice had changed the sense. But it is known that Catholics in the closest touch with the Holy See, like the unbelievers, thought that he accepted recourse to the common law. Such a general mistake by all readers as to the meaning of a document, issued to mark out a line of conduct, is a fact of special importance.

In sheltering himself under the common law, Pius X was keeping an attitude, correct, simple, and perfectly dignified. But in compelling Cardinal Lecot to contradict himself and in rejecting with so much brusqueness the very common law to which he turned for shelter, Pius X has led impartial observers to feel that he is led by a childish, hasty obstinacy; the hardheadedness of a child who knows only that he will not yield.

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I will not give much time to the contradictions and errors that can be found in your statements.

You have imputed to M. Briand words about uprooting from the minds of the children of

France the old faith, of chasing Christ from the army, the navy and the schools, which he never uttered. The denial was at once given to you; I insist no further upon it, save to point out that it cut away the main prop of your argument.

As to M. Viviani's words, the enormous re-echo they make is sufficient to show how unusual they were. While looking upon them as being as much out of place as theatrical, still I cannot understand how intelligent men can so strongly call for the freedom of their own faith at the very moment they are pouring out floods of anger against the faith—or the lack of faith—of a fellow citizen, as is M. Viviani.

You may not know that some days later, his colleague, M. Louis Passy, taking advantage of his temporary filling the presidential chair, spoke of God before the National Assembly with the accents of an unimpeachable Catholic orthodoxy. In perfect courtesy the chamber listened to him. They, whom you call the enemies of God, disturbed him not, and sat quietly while the Right applauded. Furthermore, at the session of January 9th, 1906, M. Paul Bourgeois, deputy of La Vendée, in his turn presiding, launched forth in a long speech entirely religious in trend, in a fashion, whose opposite M. Viviani seems only to have followed.

Does it not seem to you, Monseigneur, that Catholics should respect the unbelief of Atheists, if they expect the latter to respect their own faith? /  
Think you that in America you would enjoy full



and perfect liberty, if you proved yourselves unable to respect the liberties of the "Sects," no matter how fantastic.

Such an act of hard common sense is too much as yet for the mental power of many French Catholics, and not later than a few Sundays ago in Paris they wrought much evil in disturbing an archiepiscopal mass, which they were perfectly right in regarding as schismatic, but which it was their duty to leave alone.

If this attack on liberty had been the work of a lot of street arabs, I would not think of noticing it, but the leading Catholic journals, specially *la Croix*, far from denouncing it, endorsed it by their favorable reports.

Allow me to quote a few lines from *La Croix du Gard*, February 10th, 1907:

"The sacrilegious mass of the prelate ended so and so. At the close, the indignant Catholics renewed their protests, and during the address of the schismatic prelate sang to the air of the Mascot a ribaldry, of which one verse is here given:

« Un vieux singe d'Amérique  
« Débarqué de Chicago  
« Vient bénir la République  
« Des cambrioleurs légaux.  
« Ah! n'nous troublons pas pour ça,  
« On le chahute, on le chahute!  
« Ah! n'nous troublons pas pour ça,  
« On le chahutera. »

Such, Monseigneur, are the journals in France, which speak in the church's name, and every year receive the apostolic benediction.

Another mistake, which I venture to point out

to you briefly, is what you say apropos of church property, viz.: that in 1802 it was turned over to the State on the *expressed* condition that it would go to support the clergy. The Concordat has no such *expressed* condition. By Article 13, the Holy See "for the sake of peace and the happy re-establishment of the Catholic religion" agrees never to disturb the holders of church property. In Article 14, the Government of the Republic guarantees a proper support to the clergy. There is, however, no connection between the two articles and the words cited from Article 13 show that the Pope accepted purely and simply the results, and there was no question of a rent in perpetuity due by the State to the Church.

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But, however serious the matters to which heretofore I have had the honor of calling your attention, they are much less than the great error you fall into by your silence as to the immense blessing secured to the Church by the new law—liberty. A liberty which she never had even in the days when she was on top, respected, or should I say, pampered, by the civil power. Before even the new law was passed, the rupture of diplomatic relations between the Republic and the Holy See gave to the Church two essential liberties, two, indeed, which she had never enjoyed under any régime in France, the liberty of ecclesiastical nominations and the liberty of meetings. (14)

The Pope hastened to take advantage of the first, and since the days so many ages ago, when



St. Gregory sent St. Augustine and his troop of bishops to England, there never was seen a similar ceremony before the Apostolic Chair.\* In their turn, the bishops were as hurried in naming curés to all the vacant parishes. Thrice, finally, the French Episcopate enjoyed the second liberty by holding their meetings, when they discussed in perfect freedom every question they had at heart. (15)

Now I dare ask respectfully of you, Your Eminence, can a Government which day after day gives to a body, as strongly organized as the Church, such liberty, be likened to I know not what sort of tyrants, who carry in their hearts the hatred of God and His Church?

How do the inconveniences of the law stand alongside of these freedoms? Is it not evident that if our rulers were such as they have been described, they would have taken precious care not to annul a treaty which by allowing them to name bishops and pastors kept in their hands a rare means of bondage.

The more it is supposed that the French Government wishes only to make war upon religion, the more wonderful is the fair dealing, of which it has given proof in renouncing the influence secured

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\* Reference to the fourteen bishops consecrated by Pius X in Rome. M. Sabatier means not that St. Gregory consecrated St. Augustine and his brother bishops. He refers to the liberty the Pope enjoyed in 596 as regards England and the renewal of that liberty in 1906 as regards France. St. Augustine was consecrated by Virgilius of Arles in 597. Later on, St. Gregory authorized him to consecrate twelve bishops for as many sees in England.—Translator.

by the Concordat, over the Church's destinies. (16)

It might also be clear to thoughtful people that the Pope's haste to make use of the advantages of the new situation created a sort of tacit understanding that he would accept its inconveniences. (17)

So true are all these considerations here put before Your Eminence, that the entire French Episcopate, when acknowledging the Encyclical *Vehe-menter*, began with a solemn hosanna and welcomed "with an unanimous outburst of thankfulness the hour when one of its dearest liberties was restored to the Church of France."

In thus speaking [May 30th, 1906,] and placing the pæan of victory at the forefront of a solemn address to the Holy Father, Cardinal Lecot, Archbishop of Bordeaux, and along with him the French Episcopate, proclaimed to the whole world the happy results naturally following from the new law. (18) True, indeed, later on, in response to the Encyclical *Vehementer*, "a true monument of wisdom both human and divine," so they styled it, the bishops condemned the false principle of the possible separation of Church and State; but this condemnation is in theory and affects America as well as France, and cannot be taken apart from the subsequent deliberations.

Now it is just this that the Holy See hesitated not to do. In the Bull *Gravissimo*, Pope Pius X, passing over this declaration of principle on the part of the Episcopate with a simple reference, left

France and the whole world ignorant that this opening statement, which was a kind of platonic compliment to an impossible ideal, was followed by discussions, long and serious, when most of the bishops proposed various practical solutions.

If by 72 votes against 2, the assembly condemned separation, it is but the truth to add that by a vote of 48 against 26 the bishops favored an understanding. Finally, they submitted to the Holy See statutes in harmony with the Civil Law without harm or hurt to Catholic doctrine. This settlement, offered by Mgr. Fulbert-Petit, Archbishop of Besançon, was carried by 56 votes against 18.

Allow me, Your Eminence, to remind you of the amazement which spread over France when, on the publication of the Encyclical *Gravissimo*, it was known from disclosures that no one dared deny, how greatly differed what had passed at the meeting of the bishops and what was contained in the Encyclical apparently. Regrettable it is, that words wounding the dignity of the Holy See were uttered. Would it not have been better to have safeguarded that dignity by the Pope speaking so clearly that his words might be understood without affording those who knew not the facts a chance to believe the very opposite of the truth? This astonishment, so evident among us, passed into all lands where our debates had been followed with some interest. To-day it almost seems forgotten. But history never has a short memory.

Behold, then, the great majority of the French



Episcopate, knowing the profound changes which are the outcome of the trend of ideas among our people, while in theory opposing separation, were ready in practice to counsel the acceptance of the law.

On their part, the cream of French Catholics had anticipated this acceptance in a letter (19) signed by men whose names had long been known beyond the ocean; in the first place by Ferdinand Brunetière, Denys Cochin, George Goyau, Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu. Thureau-Dangin, the Marquis of Vogüe, the Count d'Haussonville, George Picot, etc.

Do you think that all you say of our new French legislation, the perverse account you give of our Parliament and our Government, leaves it possible to poorly informed readers to realize that this famous law was, upon mature reflection, accepted in a way by the clergy as well as by the eminent laymen above mentioned?

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Let me add that the above was endorsed by the popular vote. You are not unaware that the general elections to Parliament took place last summer (1906), and they resulted in an extraordinary victory for the deputies who favored separation. True, Mgr. Bourne, Archbishop of Westminster, hesitated not recently to state that the elections in France might not have offered a correct notion of opinion because of the ease with which the Government could bring pressure upon them. And I can hardly understand how insinuations so grave



could have been reproduced cheerfully and without protest in a number of French journals (January 7th, 1907).

To demonstrate the injustice of such accusations, it is unnecessary to remark that, freedom of the press in France being unlimited, the Government's enemies had ways without stint to pour out their complaints; but strangers who would doubt of the general honesty of our elections need only make a simple reflection in order to make their minds easy.

In a large country, which are the sections the Government puts on pressure most effectually? Surely, there where education has least penetrated and where the resistance of individuals to the State is least certain. It was so under the Empire and Royalty; in the most backward cantons the Government won its chief victories. To-day the rôles are reversed. It is in the mountainous districts, where flourishes intellectual and physical misery, the Government met its most violent opponents. The Right was not deceived; well they knew that in order not to receive a sure defeat, one of its leaders, M. Piou, who had even received from Rome a kind of canonical backing (20), chose to be elected in one of the most uncouth, most uncultured and most ignorant of our Departments, viz., Lozère.

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Is this known in America? We should say not; for if you were aware of it, you would judge us quite differently. Know you that since 1870 the

Clerical party have not stopped attacking all our liberties? At first, like Frenchmen, they struggled above board; but once they saw they could never thus destroy them, they turned to crooked ways and crafty means, till finally they became a hybrid group, made up of the refuse of all tyrannies and self-called *Action libérale populaire*.

In a large number of dioceses the Ecclesiastical machinery was in the eyes of the electors the foster parent of the *Action libérale*. The result was what it should have been.

Throughout the whole land, there was a hearty uprising against the hypocrisy of the candidates and a warm anger against the priests who had put at their service their sacerdotal influence. Among us one sin is never forgiven—hypocrisy. Too often alas, the men who pretend to represent the Church without the slightest protest on her part have amazed the country by the ease with which they deceived opinion or strove to deceive it.

Ceaselessly is it said that the Church is indifferent to the diverse forms of government; but unfortunately the clergy, who from 1802 to 1870 had astonished the country by their faculty of adapting themselves to every successive régime during those two generations, all of a sudden surprised everybody by their radical inability to accept the Democracy.

Under Leo XIII, there was a rally; but considering the attitude to-day of those who obeyed then the brilliant directions of the Pope, it must be granted that either his instructions had no sense

or bearing, or that they who accepted them saw in them only a dextrous move destined in the end to swallow up the republic.

The Church is not dead in France, but she has exhibited a moral and social incapacity, from which she can free herself only with great difficulty. What the conscience of the country, be it that of the brainy men or that of the dullards, demands of her is that she be a school of morals. To this call she has not answered.

She understood not the voice of the public conscience, demanding of her to crown personal morality with a civic and social morality. What, also, perhaps, caused her to lose the most of her power, is that she has stood by while her representatives lay in wait for universal suffrage in order to corrupt or destroy it. Never has she been known to undertake in good earnest her own improvement.

What would make her lovable and strong in our day would be if, as a rule, her members were morally better than others. Whereas, in fact, their chief characteristic in the eyes of their fellow citizens is that they think and act as if the advance of thought had been held up some six or seven centuries ago.

Finally, these men, who stand up so stoutly for tradition, have a very special way of looking at it. Their religious traditions retain the prophets, but exclude the prophetic spirit; retain the Gospels, but shut out Gospel faith in the future. Specially they count upon extracts from the Fathers, separated from their context, splendid



flowers, no doubt, but dried up in a framework formed of scholastic treatises.

In national traditions even, these Catholics make selections and would like to wipe out certain periods. Willingly they oppose the sons of St. Louis to the sons of the Revolution, as if the latter were not our grandfathers as the former were our great grandfathers! On the other hand, French democracy, without canonizing any page of the past or blotting out any, turns more willingly to the future, not so much in order to foresee it as to prepare for it.

Behold, Your Eminence, some points which must be taken into account in order to understand the present crisis. Say to your countrymen that French Catholics have too often deserved to be called "strangers within the gate" because of their indifference to questions over which everyone around them is eager and wrought up. Tell them that because of their dreaming about supernatural and miraculous virtues, they seem to forget the greatness, the beauty and the holiness of manly work and human effort. Say to them again that a large portion of our higher clergy have not yet learned to stop casting into simple souls the germs of the strangest misunderstandings in contrasting with the Gospels the principles of 1789 and the Declaration of the Rights of Man. (21)

Tell them that too often they pass their days in useless regrets and know not how to observe all that is grand and consoling in the present hour. They understand not the profound revolution



which is working its way in the mind and heart of the country nor the immense progress already wrought in steadfastness of character.

France is not what she would like to be; she dwells upon what is wanting to her, rather than upon what she has; and this feeling is new enough among us to be worth the while to refer to it. Is it necessary to add that I speak of that which is lacking to her from the spiritual and moral standpoint? Materially, alas, she feels as much as ever the wounds of 1870, but recalls it rather as a wound to her self-love than as an error she regrets as much for the sake of the victor and his allies as for her own. She ceases not to think of it, but without hate or anger, and wants neither a war of revenge nor to forget it. What, then, is her wish? Would she expect a miracle? No longer.

Highminded and at the same time modest, reserved and also resolute, she realizes that the day has dawned for mankind to take a new step towards peace among the nations. She desires peace firmly, not from weakness or closeness, but because wars are become to her both wicked and foolish.

The duties of a citizen towards that vast family, known as his country, are also among her chief matters of reflection. Conscious is she that her answers to them, especially since 1870, have nothing trivial and passing in them.

Far from the love of country seeming to entail

necessarily hatred of the stranger, she sees in it, on the contrary, the first step and readiness to a still more comprehensive love.

Now in these thoughts that engross her attentions, in these dreams she cannot shake off, France had hoped to have the Church at her side to direct and encourage her. This juncture came not.

That venerable mother of our civilization understands not what is going on in the hearts of her children. On seeing them absorbed in a dreamy longing with their eyes gazing out beyond the horizon, she no longer grasps the pure or manly in that gaze. She would arrest their growth and keep them at her side as babes forever.

A gross deception it is to behold in the present crisis only a dispute between the Holy See and the Government of the Republic. Step by step, ecclesiastical authority has turned in upon itself. Disdaining always to answer every request to explain, it frequently strikes with the spiritual and temporal rods, frightfully so at times and then again ridiculously. (22)

The Church is not cut off from among the living; but she seems to have undertaken the task of breaking every tie by which men act and counter-act upon one another.

Try, Your Eminence, to make up a list of all the ecclesiastics of France whom you know, specially of those whose works you have profitably read, and say honestly if such a list tallies not almost to a dot with the lists of suspects or banned, issued by the Roman Congregations.

What I have said to you aloud, is carried in the hearts of thousands of priests, as well as of a large part of the French Episcopate, among whom are they who would have expressed it all with an eloquence and a power of love and sorrow that my words carry not. You well know that if they have not done so, it is because the Episcopate have no right to speak other than to applaud the Holy Father. Was it thought that when Papal Infallibility, restricted indeed to questions of faith and morals, was defined *ex cathedra*, that some thirty years later there would come a sweet pious Pope, who would act as if the Pope were infallible at all times and upon all questions, as though he held within himself the entire thought and the whole life of the Church?

Our bishops deliberate, but in darkness and in silence. How do you fancy lay France feels about all this mystery? It knows well that it is not enough to hide behind bolts and bars and devoutly recite the *Veni Creator*, in order to receive all the light needed.

The legends of Christmas and St. Nicholas are told to boys of fifteen years. To-day without any shadow of doubt, we know that if the most venerable assembly of the world—to which you belong—deliberates under the Eternal Eye, it also ponders under eyes more earthly and less disinterested. If the secrecy of the Conclave of 1903 was not disturbed by the Roman populace pouring in, external influence knew how, by ways that are dark, to successfully penetrate it. Its secret is



now known to us ; a secret in no wise to anybody's credit. Would that the Church put aside ways that make her appear out of joint with our times. Would that she announced, not in empty words, but with all her strength, that if she has the truth, she keeps it not hidden away in a coffer as a treasure, acquired once and for all, whose key she alone holds, but that she has truth in the measure in which she finds it and finds it in the measure in which she seeks for it.

Let her do this and without renouncing an iota of the past, and she will find herself at once journeying alongside of the France of to-day, which is taken up, above all things, with every work of disinterested intellectual effort, of love, of solidarity.

Whosoever speaketh of the scepticism of our country, make it clear that they see only its surface. True, upon all sides are numbers, who have renounced the Bread of Life, which up to now the many churches offered to them. Far from this, however, being a proof that they no longer wish for spiritual food, it rather shows that the nourishment given of old suffices no longer. (23)

What our people expect from their pastors is that they witness to the moral law, that they adorn and enrich life in explaining its meaning, and that from the pulpit are heard not only doctrinal and metaphysical truths, but that it above all imparts a word of sympathy and love for all that is good. Now, however, under the pretext of strengthening them against the devil and his snares, nearly all



the pulpits of France are rostrums, whence Sunday after Sunday is preached hatred.

Many who go not to Church are reached by the journals for which she is responsible. Look at our religious press and say, if in styling it empty and hateful, it is judged too harshly. Now, bear well in mind that the work of the journals of Paris is spread by the efforts of countless local papers which also extend the evil. Excelling in the art of calumny, they insinuate the vilest falsehoods; however, with such vagueness as to escape the courts.

What must be the state of such minds, who fancy that God, Christ and His Church, are served by such falsehoods and libels? What must be thought of an ecclesiastical authority, implacable against errors in doctrine, but has never a word of reproach against those who poison their fellow men with such morals? A great shame is it, Monseigneur, which has turned from the Church more Christians than one would suppose. (24)

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There remain faults to fall into, and come they will. Ecclesiastical authority is neither at its first nor its final error. At this moment it is its own judge, nor will this prove the least outcome of the present crisis.

Certainly I believe not in breaking off unity; I hope strongly, on the contrary, that the unity, external and official, of to-day will be transformed and find its fulfillment in becoming the union of wills toward a common effort.

Henceforth, Rome will follow still the old ways

of so many human authorities, already vanished or about to vanish. It will keep on refusing to permit itself to be discussed, and will continue to prepare in the dark, decisions which at times will give light unexpectedly and at other times exhaust the patience of the most resigned; decisions, always peremptory and absolute, but never destined to become the torch to light up with its translucent beams, like God's sunlight, the path of the sinner as well as of the just. Now and then it will vouchsafe some signs, but as they would appear unimportant, Rome will impart them now so vaguely, again so elusively, that they will only answer to something far indeed from the simple truth and might even be likened to falsehoods.

Some days ago was published a declaration, signed by the unanimous French Episcopate. Now to-day it is known, from evidence which must be admitted, that the declaration was drafted in Rome and published without securing the assent of all whose names it bears. It would be cruel and improper to add more. (25)

Another fault, moreover, I should point out, which, without being a prophet, can be as readily foreseen as the impertinences of a hardheaded child.

French clericals always interpret awry the kindnesses shown them. Incapable of wishing liberty, cordially and sincerely, to those who think not as themselves, they judge other people by their own standards. As soon as any respect is shown to their ideas or any liberty granted to them, they

fancy either insincerity or some mephistophelian scheme, or else they are needed or feared. They dream they are masters and power will again be in their hands.

Such a frame of mind will once again produce its mental fruits. The very liberal answers given by a very large number of municipalities to the document known as the "Declaration of the Bishops" at once turned their heads. Even now (end of February, 1907) we hear of the referendum, of the plebiscite, of the communes in favor of the Church against the Government. The Assumptionists, who purposely throw out these notices in the press, stand ready to influence the opinion of the whole world; perfectly well they know to what they must stick; they, too, are aware, thoroughly so, that sections, largely Protestant or radical-socialistic, will leave the place of worship to the Curés. At the same time, they regard themselves apt in swelling their tones and in imputing to liberalism and its deeds a meaning and a trend diametrically the opposite to that intended. So often and so well will they declare that these municipal acts constitute a protest against the Government's policy that they will force the communes to reconsider their first intentions.

Finally, what they desire above all is the day when, driving the municipalities and the Government beyond patience, they will, by their schemings, force the closing of some churches, so that with some show of reason they may cry: Persecution. In France their complaints are seldom taken



seriously, but these great patriots hope that the tide of general reprobation will become strong enough to wipe out a detested government.

Behold, Your Eminence, what measures of political jobbery strangers endorse, very innocently, in fact, who, in the goodness of their hearts, rush too fast to the help of sufferers, whose heart breaking cries have come to their ears.

If the campaign so merrily carried on in the press against lay France should continue, it would not in the least change facts, so clear of themselves. But indeliberate movements of public opinion, above all in a land like yours, whose esteem is specially dear to France, would prove infinitely hurtful to Catholicism. For, in the long run, the responsibility would fall upon the Holy See, which follows these movements so attentively and so wistfully. The success of this Anti-French agitation would prove one thing only, viz.: that Catholicism, instead of being as its name indicates, a bond of sympathy between nations, excels, on the contrary, in creating among them misunderstandings and deplorable divisions. (26)

Far off, indeed, is the day when our sister, Italy, thought that we were going to re-establish St. Peter's throne. More recently, the *entente cordiale* with England has found its opponents only among Catholics, whence with a sad bravery issued words which should have put to shame those who used them, if it were not clear to all that those knight-errants of French honor are irresponsible marionnettes.



The sentiment, Your Eminence, which has led me to take pen in hand is without doubt the wish that my country be not despised and judged wrongly. Another reason, also—and perhaps stronger—is the love of that venerable Mother Church, who owes so much to France and to which France owes so much. I believe in her transformation, her reformation, her getting into line, because I believe in her life. Would that the error of them who confound the letter with the spirit standing still with truth, not lead her to desire the position of idols upraised in niches, whence the flow of humanity is looked down upon. That may be an apotheosis; it is also death.

Alongside the Catholics, of whom I have just spoken, there are others to whom we turn with a joyous confidence. For they love their times and their country, not with a supernatural, theological love, but as men after a human fashion. They have the faith, a faith that need not call an adversary a liar or a possessed. They dream not of killing, but of converting.

They accept Catholic tradition that is as the Truth and the Life, for they bring themselves to realize the words of St. Augustine, which the Church makes use of in the office of Holy Thursday, at the twilight of the day when our thoughts turn to the Upper Room and Gethsemane, hailing and preparing for a Communion, of which the Cenacle was only the promise and the prophecy: "The most of the time when you fancy you are

hating an enemy, you hate a brother and know it not." (27)

If it were given you to see at first hand what is going on in France, you would need little time, Your Eminence, to perceive that our Democracy is entirely the opposite of being materialistic or self-satisfied. If to believe that truth is more in the future than in the past, that it continues and will still continue to be sought after, that it is not found once and for all (28), that every grain of it, which our ancestors discovered, increases the duty of further research, if all these sentiments make up a dangerous error, then France is lost.

But if, on the other hand, such dreams, such aspirations from the soul even of the Faith, if it were the trend towards such sentiments that made the Law and the Prophets the forerunners of the Gospel; if it is their presence in the teaching of Jesus, which has made it not the truth of one age and one land but a force, the starting point of unending progress and expansion, then must we conclude that France in spite of all her faults is on the right way. And much will be forgiven her because she hath loved much.

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I cannot, however, end this letter, already too long, without saying a word upon a question which I have neither the skill nor the mission to put before you, but which as I know is deep in the hearts of some French bishops, and of those of the clergy, whose ideas are not enclosed with the lines so stiffly laid down by the daily press. (29)

If during these past months no authorized Catholic voice dare approach it publicly, it is really, I can assure you, because men dreaded to speak too feelingly and because also it was thought that any step on the part of the clergy of France might compromise the Holy See. It is the question of Episcopal nominations. Your voice, Your Eminence, is among those which have the right to make themselves heard. More than once you have not failed and we know that only lately you had the courage to undertake the cause of justice against the Canadian Episcopate and had the good fortune to gain your point.\*

Why would you not explain to the Supreme Authority the desire of French Catholics to see fixed the way of electing bishops?

Since the Supreme Pontiff, now presiding over the destinies of the Church, is moved by a special love for them, he could hardly show it better than in restoring the rules of Canon Law. And as you are so convinced that what is needful for the Catholics of France is liberty, like to that in the United States, will you then exert your influence to the end that the Holy See also enters into these views and grant to the Eldest Daughter of the Church not unusual privileges, but purely and simply the rights conceded to the Catholics of the New World?

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Pardon me, Your Eminence, for anything in this

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\* Probably a reference to Cardinal Gibbons' defense of the Knights of Labor.—Translator.



letter that may be contrary to forms, which in my ignorance I may have broken. I comfort myself a little in thinking that the illustrious Cardinal whom I ventured to address has himself in this point more than one fault upon his conscience. For he has been seen to arrive at the Vatican in a turnout which, if truly apostolic, did not fail, nevertheless, to cause a little excitement among the honorable officials of the Sacred Palace, so tenacious of olden customs. (30)

Deign to accept, Your Eminence, the homage of my most respectful sentiments.

PAUL SABATIER.





## **NOTES OF THE AUTHOR**



## NOTES.

1 (page 35). *Après la Séparation*, by Count d'Haussonville, of the French Academy and the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences. 12mo. 94 pp. Paris, 1906.

2 (page 35). For example, cf., *La Vérité Française*, February 1st, 1906, a paper on "The Eternal Enemy."

3 (page 36). *La Revue Catholique des Eglises*, February, 1907, makes it a duty to point out "this dictatorship of religion by laymen without authority or fitness, defending the Church against laïcism, making themselves masters of orthodoxy, jealously monopolizing the interests of religion and almost succeeding in making their journalism regarded as the ordinary magisterium of the Church.

4 (page 39). To have an exact notion of this speech, the *Journal Officiel*, of January 16th, which published it in extenso, should be read. Some clerical journals kept completely silent about it; others, v. g., *Le Gaulois*, were bold enough to boast of their silence.

5 (page 40). Cf., *Les Etudes*, October 6th, 1906, p. 37. This is a well-known review of the Jesuits.

6 (page 40). *La Découverte du Vieux Monde par un étudiant de Chicago*, 12mo, pp. 320, 1906. This book of the Abbé Klein is not, in fact, the only one wherein can be found discreet and sensible



views on the present crisis. There still remain a few priests in France who understand well enough their environment to recognize the straightforwardness and good will of the men in the opposition. Among the publications on the Separation, there is another—the work of a priest also—short, sharp, full of sincerity, manliness, and faith, worthy of being placed alongside of the illuminating speeches of M. Briand. I refer to the pamphlet *Politique religieuse et Séparation*, by the Abbé Hemmer, of the Diocese of Paris, 12mo, pp. 88, Paris, 1905.

7 (page 44). On Political Catholicism, *Demain*, November 3, 1905, p. 4.

8 (page 47). Is it not strange that the most determined enemies of the Government saw not all these faults of the law? They decried it as tyrannical and detestable, but as a whole in a vague, general way, because of its origin. They feared lest the Holy See might finally accept it, and they cared not to burn their bridges behind them. *A tolerari posse* was regarded as so certain, that on all sides under Episcopal direction and approbation, Catholic jurists studied beforehand the questions which its application might raise, e. g., *Exposé de la Situation légale de l'Eglise Catholique en France d'après la loi du 11 décembre, 1905* (Its properties, its clergy, its worship), by L. Jenouvrier, former President of the Bar Association of Rennes; Cardinal Labouré, Archbishop of Rennes, under date December 12th, 1905, wrote a letter of introduction to it. This was the time when most

zealous clericals were explaining to good people that the law was radically bad, but that the Pope, by virtue of his apostolic office and in the fulness of his power (*plenitudo potestatis*) could heal it radically [*sanare in radice*]. Such zealots would be paid by Protestant controversialists not to explain Infallibility more stupidly. For them, it lies not in the power which the Pope enjoys of defining, i. e., of *declaring existing facts*; it would rather imply a kind of creative power. Simple folks will find it hard to understand how a Pope, sweet and honest, made not over the law that healing sign of the Cross which it was in his power to do.

9 (page 47). M. Briand himself, as reporter of the Commission, declares that the regular constitution of the associations for public worship would require a priest in communion with a bishop, who himself should be in communion with the Pope. The strong majority who voted for §4 embraced *all the Catholic deputies of the Chamber*. (Translator's italics.)

10 (page 48). Appeal of a group of French Catholics to Pope Pius X. 32 pp. Nourry, Paris, 1906.

11 (page 48). In taking these steps the Prelates thought they were in perfect accord with the instructions of Pius X, who, in the Bull *Gravissimo*, August 10th, 1906, instructed the bishops to make use of all the means known to the Law in order to arrange and organize religious worships. So explained to his clergy Cardinal Lecot, who added: This declaration being a mere official formality

implies neither the renouncing of any right nor the interference of any outside influence on the exercise of worship, we see no reason of importance to keep us from signing it.

12 (page 48). The steps taken by these prelates would have been quickly followed by the other bishops and would have made for peace. To hold that Pius X wanted war absolutely would be to lay at his door a directness of intention against which he would be in the right to protest. But what is certain is that he sought not a peace—the outflow of the natural trend of our institutions.

13 (page 49). Hateful press \* \* \* and we must add lying. If it is hard for daily newspapers to shun a number of errors, owing to the swiftness of information, and if consequently a large indulgence in this regard is due them, this, however, cannot be granted when it is question of deliberate falsehoods renewed day by day and which it is not possible in spite of the most striking proofs to have withdrawn. But these falsehoods being, if the expression is permissible, the weapons of their politics, they are become slaves to such which they never can shake off. I shall quote only two, to maintain which no fact can be alleged and yet accepted are they by certain organs as truths not needed to be proven. The first is that the law of Separation is the result of Protestant efforts; the second, that the Government would desire to favor foolish schismatic attempts.

14 (page 53). Men, even of large and democratic ideas, like the Abbé Naudet, were convinced



that the freedom of Episcopal nominations would be impaired.

"It is known already," he said in *La Justice Sociale*, November 11th, 1906, "that our rulers will not accept the direct and sole nominations of the Pope. Moreover, no one is ignorant what sense the word 'separation' has in the mouths of these people. French law permits not a citizen to accept a function or even a decoration from a foreign ruler without official authorization. We may feel sure that the government, be it what it may, will not permit to lie idle this weapon very dangerous for us. It can even go so far as to make impossible the use of the Episcopal office."

These lines are noteworthy. They prove how little among the clergy a frank, loyal, liberal trial of Separation could be expected. But since at no time has the Government searched for any such weapon in its Law Codes, perhaps it would be fair to recognize this and be grateful for it.

Again not only the clerical journals as a rule have given no thought to apologizing, but their tremendous blunders as to the Government's aims have taught them nothing, and day by day they begin to impute to it the darkest designs. Such steady relapses make the more praiseworthy the recent words of the Abbé Naudet: "The conduct and words of M. Briand are those of a man desirous of peace, peace in liberty" (*Justice Sociale*, February 23d, 1907), and the stand of the Abbé Darby, who in his *Vie Catholique* gave in full the speech of Minister of Public Worship (cf. specially the issue of November 17th, 1906). Should not,



we trust, these views of priests long known to the Archbishop of Baltimore, and in whose works he is interested, have led him to desire to form a personal opinion upon the events in France, based solely upon authentic documents?

15 (page 54). Liberty, that is, on the part of the State. The Holy See, however, took care not to leave the French Episcopate to their own initiative; it fixed rigorously the order of the day and even reserved to itself the choice of the prelates who would make up the chief commissions.

16 (page 55). This correctness and serenity create ways so removed from those of the clericals that they refuse to credit them and give out in their journals the most grotesque statements, e. g.: They announced seriously that the new bishops, on their way back from Rome, would be held up at the frontier. Their simple readers bubbled up with anger against our abominable and tyrannical Government. When the bishops had all arrived safely in their respective dioceses without any let or hindrance to the ovations gotten up in their honor, those people not even thought how atrociously they had been deceived by their pious journals. Not only the loyalty of the Government in this matter was not recognized, but calumny was the only thanks.

17 (page 55). Finally, the persistent opponents of separation very loyally perceived that to make use of part of the law would render them its accomplices. They desired then that Catholics would look upon it as not existing, at least in this sense that they

would not use the rights conferred by it and would keep from profiting from the advantages which it might bring to them. (cf. Count d'Haussonville: *Après la Séparation*, p. 20.)

18 (page 55). The full text of this address was given in *l'Osservatore Romano*, August 14th, 1906. A Catholic journal, which as a rule adopts a less oratorical tone, could say:

"This meeting in Paris is the grandest deed in our history since the Concordat. It marks the end of a system: the anarchy and powerlessness of a Church under the leading strings of the State. It is a resurrection to life with liberty. Gratefully we salute it as the first step in that future of progress, of peace, and of order, for which we labor and which, in spite of the unhappy trials of the present hour, will dawn upon our country finally." (*Bulletin de la Semaine*, June 6, 1906, Paris.)

Strangers, who wished to be posted upon the religious questions in France, might subscribe to it or to the excellent *Demain*, of Lyons. These two weeklies, both strictly Catholic, have an intellectual and moral standing which ranks them away and beyond the mass of religious papers.

The few lines that I have taken from the *Bulletin de la Semaine* announce all right the enthusiasm with which those, whom I must term Catholics in contradistinction to the Catholic clericals, accepted the decisions of the first meeting of the bishops. Naturally they could hardly look forward to the strange lot that befell them at Rome.

19 (page 57). The text appeared in *le Figaro*,

March 26th, 1906, and the next day in a large number of other papers.

20 (page 58). cf., for example, the article, *Rome et l'Action libérale* in *Verité français*, August 15th, 1906.

21 (page 61). At Christmastide, 1906, Mgr. Andrieu, bishop of Marseilles, delivered in his cathedral a discourse that has been scattered all over France, and whose ending *la Croix*, January 9th, 1907, resumes thus: *The principles of the Revolution* have ruined France; she will only become great, strong, and happy by returning to *the principles of the Gospels*.

22 (page 63). These expressions may seem severe to the general public. But do they appear unjust to those who know what sufferings can be cloaked under the threats: *To dismiss in disgrace, to cast out to starve?*

Some clerical heads adopt methods which no government would dare use. In the year of grace, 1906, Cardinal Ferrata, acting as prefect of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, declared that permission to say Mass can be given to Father Tyrrell only when he pledges himself to write no longer upon religious questions and to submit beforehand all his correspondence for the approbation of a censor, named by the ordinary.

23 (page 65). Is it not a sign of the times, this joining of the two terms, Free Thought and Religion, which many look upon as contradictions? These last days in Paris, specially in the Latin



Quarter, have been pasted up bills with the headline, "Movement of Religious Free Thought." Three contradictory conferences of M. J. J. Kaspar have been presided over in turn by MM. Paul Guieysse and de Pressensé, members of Parliament, and M. Gabriel Séailles, Professor at the Sorbonne.

24 (page 66). Here I speak only of the daily press. Thanks to *Demain* and the *Bulletin de la Semaine*, quoted above, the weekly press is already in touch with the new spirit, which,—we may add,—is triumphant in the reviews. Doubtlessly these last are but partially imbued with it, but almost all make a good impression willing-nilling. Surely the difference between the daily and monthly press is very evident. For the writings in the daily press a strong conviction answers, while articles of greater pretensions in a review compel their authors to delve deep into questions, to weigh the opposing views and to search out the sources. It is an intelligent, lively, and, above all, expanding work.

Twenty years ago, French Catholicism had nothing like the publications of to-day, e. g., *Le Bulletin de l'Institut catholique de Toulouse*, *Revue d'Histoire et de Littérature*, *Annales de Philosophie chrétienne*, *Revue du Clergé français*, *Revue Biblique*, *Quinzaine*, *Revue Catholique des Eglises*. All these magazines—and the list might be made much longer—are perfectly orthodox. That which, however, marks them off from their predecessors or rivals is the de-



sire to accomplish apostolic work in intellectual centres. The men who direct them realize the day upon which the Church will no longer convert the savages she will not have lost all her usefulness though she may run the risk of becoming an article of export to the colonies.

25 (page 67). Well, I know that these revelations have been denied; it is but right to ask what notion of honesty do these people form to themselves, who cast noisily in one's face a denial, only to yield a moment later in detail everything they had defended as a whole beforehand.

Unable to probe to the bottom this matter here, it will be enough to say to those for whom the word of truth has an exact meaning that *La Croix* opened its issue of January 30th, 1907, with these words:

WE HAVE OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF A DOCUMENT OF CAPITAL IMPORTANCE.

It then gave the document known as: DECLARATION OF THE BISHOPS OF FRANCE, followed by the signatures of 87 Prelates. The same day, *L'Univers* published the same document. Now, we dare affirm that neither the staff of these journals nor any one else in the world has seen the original with the names of the bishops affixed to it.

Moreover, one of the leading clerical papers—I note this with pleasure—had the frankness to state that the text published by *l'Osservatore Romano*, January 31st, 1907, differed in two points of the

